

App. No 10/026,099
Amdt. Dated December 8, 2003
Reply to Office Action of September 9, 2003

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1 – 3, 6, 15, 16, 18, 19, and 22 – 24 are pending in this application.

Please charge deposit account 02-1653 for any necessary fees due, now or in the future, including one additional independent claim.

The paragraph referencing the priority document of the present application has been deleted from the specification in order to overcome the Examiner's objection.

Claim 1 has been amended to more clearly distinguish the claims of the present application over the cited references. It is respectfully submitted that no new issues are being raised since the amendments to claim 1 comprise the addition of features already disclosed in previously submitted claims. In particular, amended claim 1, in which the bead-like embossment has been deleted, includes the features of claim 4 and some of the alternatives from claim 5. In addition, in view of the alternatives contained in original claim 5, new claims 22 – 24 are being submitted herewith to cover all such alternatives. Again, no new issues are involved.

Amended claim 1 now contains the features from original claim 5 that the blade sections 6 have a double trapezoidal shape, including radially inner edges 20 that merge in an angular manner with radially outer edges 22, wherein the radially outer edges merge in an angular manner with the radial ends 10 of the blade section 6. It is respectfully submitted that claim 1 makes it clear that the term "edges" refers to those edges that extend in the radial direction of the cutting blade. Accordingly, the radially extending edges have an outer and an inner edge portion, whereby the radially inner edge section merges in an angular manner (or with a radius, as in claims 22 and 24)

App. No 10/026,099
Amdt. Dated December 8, 2003
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with the radially outer edge portions. As indicated on page 4 of the specification of the instant application, in lines 14 and 15, the edges of each blade section therefore extend in a bent manner relative to the longitudinal axis of the blade sections. It is respectfully submitted that this configuration is clearly described in the claims by the "double trapezoidal shape" language. As a consequence of the inventive configuration of the cutting blade, there results an approximately uniform distribution of bending and twisting stresses during operation of the cutting blade. In this way, stress peaks can be avoided, and the service life of the cutting blade can be increased. Furthermore, when the cutting blade strikes a hard object near its outer end, the blade is better protected against damage, since a more favorable angle of the blade sections results due to the double trapezoidal shape.

The Examiner has indicated that, among others, claims 1 – 5 are unpatentable over Andersson in view of Ely. Andersson discloses a cutting blade having a main body on which the blade is disposed. However, the edges of the blade are not embodied as cutting edges, with cutting edges 7 being provided only on blade sections of the knife means 6. These cutting edges 7 furthermore do not form a double trapezoidal shape with the main body. Nor does the secondary reference of Ely provide this missing feature. In particular, in contrast to amended claim 1 of the instant application, the cutting blade of Ely has merely one edge section, which extends to the widened radial end and on which is disposed a continuous cutting edge. It is respectfully submitted that Ely in no way teaches or suggests a double trapezoidal configuration of a cutting blade. Therefore, in contrast to the double trapezoidal shape of blade sections of

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Applicants' cutting blade, Ely cannot effect a uniform distribution of bending and twisting stresses during operation of the cutting blade, which can increase the service life of the cutting blade. Thus, even a combination of the Andersson and Ely references can in no way teach or suggest Applicants' double trapezoidal shape as defined in amended claim 1.

Although claim 11 has been cancelled, for the sake of completeness Applicants provide the following comments with regard to the Thorud reference. In particular, the cutting blade of Thorud merely has a single cutting edge on the leading edge of the cutting blade. The cutting edge is angled off relative to the main body. There is no suggestion in this reference for an additional cutting edge that is disposed on an inner or an outer edge section. Thus, this reference also can provide no suggestion for a double trapezoidal shape of a blade section.

In view of the foregoing discussion, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the allowability of the pending claims, as amended. Should the Examiner have any further comments or suggestions, the undersigned would very much welcome a telephone call from him in order to be able to expedite placement of the application into condition for allowance.

Respectfully Submitted,



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